CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Transfer of Department of Corrections' (DOC) / Pine Hills Youth Correctional Facility's (PHYCF) "Old Campus" land and associated buildings via Section 77-2-351.
Proposed Implementation Date:	December 2007
Proponent:	DOC / PHYCF.
Location:	NE4NE4 of Section 35, Township 8 North, Range 47 East, at the southeast junction of Haynes Ave. and Leighton Blvd., Miles City, Montana
County:	Custer

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

DOC proposes to transfer the "Old Campus" land and associated buildings at Pine Hills Youth Correctional Facility (PHYCF) to relieve DOC of the financial responsibility and liability of maintaining the deteriorating buildings. DOC/ PHYCF, local government officials and the public are concerned that the "Old Campus" buildings create a "safety hazard" for the public "at large". DOC proposes to transfer 17.119 acres and associated buildings of the "Old Campus" under authority of Section 77-2-351MCA, for use with a public purpose. Development of the parcel will be regulated by applicable federal, state and local regulations.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:
Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

September 5, 2007 Legislative committee hearing. Received a letter with no comments on the transfer.
September 17, 2007. Preliminary Board of Land Commissioners approval for 351 Transfer to Custer County. Begin 60 day notification period.

2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:

Development of the parcel will be regulated by applicable federal, state and local regulations.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

A. No action.
B. Action: 351 Transfer 17.119 acres of DOC / PHYCF land with associated "Old Campus" buildings.

III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:
Consider the presence of fragile, compactable or unstable soils. Identify unusual geologic features. Specify any special reclamation considerations. Identify any cumulative impacts to soils.

The soils for this area are mixed, ranging from silty clay, silty clay loam, loam, fine sandy loam, very fine sandy loam, and shallow rock-outcropping. The area lies in a 10 to 14 inch precipitation zone with an average annual forage production of 1550 lbs/acre. The slopes range from 0 to 2 %. The area has a very high water table that along with associated clayey soils generate saline seep conditions throughout much of the area. Development of the parcel will be regulated by applicable federal, state and local regulations.

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5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION:

Identify important surface or groundwater resources. Consider the potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality. Identify cumulative effects to water resources.

According to the DNRC Staff Hydrologist there are no surface water or ground water rights associated with this parcel. Development of the parcel will be regulated by applicable federal, state and local regulations

6. AIR QUALITY:

What pollutants or particulate would be produced? Identify air quality regulations or zones (e.g. Class I air shed) the project would influence. Identify cumulative effects to air quality.

The transfer of the parcel will not have any effect on air quality. Development of the parcel will be regulated by applicable federal, state and local regulations.

7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:

What changes would the action cause to vegetative communities? Consider rare plants or cover types that would be affected. Identify cumulative effects to vegetation.

The parcel has been developed as a residential and institutional area for over 100 years, so existing native species are disturbed or have been replaced by exotic species. A search of the Natural Heritage Program database indicated that there are no sensitive plants associated with this parcel. (The Natural Heritage Program report is available upon request from DNRC.) Development of the parcel will be regulated by applicable federal, state and local regulations.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:

Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

The parcel has been developed as a residential and institutional area for over 100 years, so existing native species are disturbed or have been replaced by exotic species. A search of the Natural Heritage Program database indicated that there is no sensitive wildlife, avian or aquatic species associated with this parcel. (The Natural Heritage Program report is available upon request from DNRC.) Development of the parcel will be regulated by applicable federal, state and local regulations.

9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:

Consider any federally listed threatened or endangered species or habitat identified in the project area. Determine effects to wetlands. Consider Sensitive Species or Species of special concern. Identify cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

The parcel has been developed as a residential and institutional area for over 100 years so existing native species are disturbed or have been replaced by exotic species. A search of the Natural Heritage Program database indicated that there are no threatened or endangered species associated with this parcel. (The Natural Heritage Program report is available upon request from DNRC.) Development of the parcel will be regulated by applicable federal, state and local regulations.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:
Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

DOC has complied with the State Antiquities Act by consulting with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). Individual structures associated with the Old Campus have not been formally evaluated for significance. DOC has elected not to complete a formal evaluation of these structures for this action.

11. AESTHETICS:
Determine if the project is located on a prominent topographic feature, or may be visible from populated or scenic areas. What level of noise, light or visual change would be produced? Identify cumulative effects to aesthetics.

The buildings that comprise the "Old Campus" were mothballed from 1992 to 2000 and are in a deferred maintenance and deteriorating condition. Development of the parcel will be regulated by applicable federal, state and local regulations.

12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:
Determine the amount of limited resources the project would require. Identify other activities nearby that the project would affect. Identify cumulative effects to environmental resources.

Demands on land, water, air and energy will not be impacted by the sale of the parcel. Development of the parcel will be regulated by applicable federal, state and local regulations.

13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA:
List other studies, plans or projects on this tract. Determine cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of current private, state or federal actions in the analysis area, and from future proposed state actions in the analysis area that are under MEPA review (scoped) or permitting review by any state agency.

- 2005 Ahera Asbestos-Containing Building Materials Reinspection Report and Asbestos Management Plan, Pine Hills Youth Correctional Facility, Miles City, MT.
  Prepared by: Maxim Technologies, Inc
  Prepared for: Pine Hills Youth Correctional Facility
- 1998 Asbestos Abatement and Construction Surveillance Report
  Various Structures / PHYCF, Miles City, MT.
  Performed by: Maxim Technologies, Inc
  Ordered by: Montana Department of Administration, Architecture and Engineering Division.

Development of the parcel will be regulated by applicable federal, state and local regulations.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:
Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

The transfer of this parcel will not pose a threat to human health and safety. Development of the parcel will be regulated by applicable federal, state and local regulations.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:
Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

The transfer of this parcel will have no impact on the industrial or commercial activities. Development of the parcel will be regulated by applicable federal, state and local regulations.

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:
Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to the employment market.

The transfer of the parcel will have no impact on the quality or distribution of employment. Development of the parcel will be regulated by applicable federal, state and local regulations.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:
Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

The transfer of this property will result in the conversion of this parcel of state non-trust land, which is tax exempt, to the local taxable land base. There is no way to estimate the future tax revenue generation at this time.

18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:
Estimate increases in traffic and changes to traffic patterns. What changes would be needed to fire protection, police, schools, etc.? Identify cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services

The transfer of the land would result in no changes in the demands for city services. Development of the parcel will be regulated by applicable federal, state and local regulations.

19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS:
List State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, and other zoning or management plans, and identify how they would affect this project.

Development of the parcel will be regulated by applicable federal, state and local regulations.

20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:
Identify any wilderness or recreational areas nearby or access routes through this tract. Determine the effects of the project on recreational potential within the tract. Identify cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

This parcel is not located near a wilderness or recreational area, so the sale of this property will have no effect on recreational and wilderness activities. Development of the parcel will be regulated by applicable federal, state and local regulations.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:
Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify cumulative effects to population and housing.

The transfer of this parcel will not effect population or housing. Development of the parcel will be regulated by applicable federal, state and local regulations.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:
Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

The transfer of this parcel will have no effect on the social structures or mores. Development of the parcel will be regulated by applicable federal, state and local regulations.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

The transfer of this parcel will have no effect on the unique quality of the area. Development of the parcel will be regulated by applicable federal, state and local regulations.

24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:

Estimate the return to the state. Include appropriate economic analysis. Identify potential future uses for the analysis area other than existing management. Identify cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.

The Old Campus has not been used since 1992, and does not generate income for the State of Montana. The property appraised for $390,000 as is with known asbestos contamination. Custer County will assume liability for the property from the time of the transfer forward. Development of the parcel will be regulated by applicable federal, state and local regulations.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	**Name:**	Rick Strohmyer	**Date:**	September 17, 2007
	Title:	DNRC Eastern Land Office – Area Manager		

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

ALTERNATIVE B – Action: Transfer 17.119 acres of DOC/PHYCF land with the associated "Old Campus" buildings to Custer County for use with a public purpose.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

I have evaluated the comments received and potential environment affects and have determined significant environmental effects would not result from the proposed land transfer to Custer County for use with a public purpose. Any future development proposals would have impacts evaluated under state and local regulations at that time.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

[ ]	EIS	[ ]	More Detailed EA	[x]	No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	**Name:**	Jim Hunter
	Title:	Administrator of Pine Hills Youth Correctional Facility, Dept of Corrections
Signature:		**Date**: September 17, 2007